

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 AS-01 INR-05 PRS-01 PA-01  
L-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 TRSE-00 EB-04 OMB-01  
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R 081115Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8055

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 2890

LIMDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, ASEAN, OVIP, SN

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM ON ASEAN  
MEETING AND POSSIBLE U.S. VISIT BY PRIME MINISTER LEE

1. IMMEDIATELY AFTER CONCLUSION OF 10TH ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING I HAD OPPORTUNITY FOR A FEW MINUTES PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM, DURING WHICH I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE ME A PRIVATE FILL-IN NEXT WEEK ON WHAT WENT ON DURING THE PROCEEDINGS. HE AGREED, AND ADDED THAT PRIME MINISTER LEE ALSO WANTED TO GET IN TOUCH WITH ME CONCERNING SOME THOUGHTS HE HAD ABOUT WAYS IN WHICH THE U.S. MIGHT BE OF ASSISTANCE IN ASEAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THESE THOUGHTS WOULD BE IN CONNECTION WITH THE UPCOMING US-ASEAN ECONOMIC DISCUSSIONS IN MANILA.

2. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, RAJARATNAM INDICATED THAT THE SECRETARY'S SPEECH HAD TAKEN CARE OF CONCERNS REGARDING THE U.S. ROLE IN THE ASEAN-PACIFIC REGION WHICH HAD BEEN EXPRESSED EARLIER BY VARIOUS ASEAN LEADERS. (THE COMMUNIQUE OF THE ASEAN MEETING, REPORTED SEPTTEL, IN FACT REFERRED TWICE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SECRETARY'S SPEECH IN FAVORABLE TERMS.) REFERRING TO THE SECRETARY'S REMARKS ON A POSSIBLE BIGGER AMERICAN ROLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, RAJARATNAM SAID THAT THE PROBLEM NOW WAS TO TRANSLATE THEORY INTO PRACTICE. HE INDICATED THAT PRIME MINISTER LEE WOULD HAVE SOME THOUGHTS TO OFFER ON HOW INCENTIVES MIGHT BE PROVIDED TO ATTRACT A GREATER DEGREE OF AMERICAN INVESTMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA ON A REGIONAL

BASIS.

3. I REMINDED RAJARATNAM OF THE INVITATION WHICH HAD BEEN EXTENDED TO PRIME MINISTER LEE TO VISIT THE U.S. IN THE FALL, AND SAID THAT I COULD ASSURE THE PRIME MINISTER THAT HE WOULD RECEIVE A WARM WELCOME IF HE COULD MAKE THE TRIP. RAJARATNAM STATED THAT PRIME MINISTER LEE EXPECTS TO ACCEPT THE INVITATION, BUT IS STILL UNCERTAIN AS TO THE EXACT TIME FRAME WHICH THE U.S. HAD IN MIND. I TOLD HIM IT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THE TIMING WOULD BE IN GENERAL ACCORD WITH THE OPENING OF THE U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY THIS FALL, SAY SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER, AND THAT FIRM DATES COULD BE WORKED OUT ONCE WE HAD AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE THAT THE VISIT WOULD BE MADE. RAJARATNAM SAID THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD BRING THIS UP WHEN HE NEXT SAW ME.  
HOLDRIDGE

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**Review Markings:**  
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